

CHAPTER IX

THE DOCTRINE OF LUNAR SYMPATHY

The IN the preceding chapter some evidence was adduced of the of lunar sympathetic Influence which the waxing or waning moon is sympathy, popularly supposed to exert on growth, especially on the growth of vegetation. But the doctrine of lunar sympathy does not stop there ; It is applied also to the affairs of man, and various customs and rules have been deduced from It which aim at the amelioration and even the indefinite extension of human life. To illustrate this application of the popular theory at length would be out of place here, but a few cases may be mentioned by way of specimen. Theory The natural fact on which all the customs in question moon. ^{thb^wax} seem to rest is the apparent monthly Increase and decrease or \rane of the moon. From this observation men have Inferred that with the all ^{thingg} simultaneously wax or wane In sympathy with it¹ Thus the Mentras or Mantras of the Malay Peninsula have a tradition that In the beginning men did not die but grew thin with the waning of the moon, and waxed fat as she neared the full.² Of the Scottish Highlanders we are told that "the moon In her increase, full growth, and in her wane are with them the emblems of a rising, flourishing, and declining fortune. At the last period of her revolution they carefully avoid to engage In any business of Importance ; but the first and middle they seize with avidity, presaging the most auspicious issue to their undertakings." ³ Similarly

1 This principle is clearly recognized and well illustrated by J. Grimm (*Deutsche Mythologie* II. 594-596).

No. 10 (Singapore, 1883), p. 190; W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden, *Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula*

2 D. F. A. Hervey, "The Mentra (London, 1906), ii. 337. Traditions," *Journal of the Straits* ³ Rev. J. Grant (parish minister of *Branch of the Jtoyal Asiatic Society*, Kirkmichael), in Sir John Sinclair's

